

GUIDE TO THE STATES ASSEMBLY FOR JOURNALISTS

When you're new to Jersey, or new to reporting on politics in the Island, the States Assembly can seem confusing as it has its own identity and characteristics unique to the island.

The States Greffe Digital and Public Engagement team have put together this short guide to assist you in understanding the nuances of the States Assembly and Jersey's political system. We are also happy to answer any further questions you may have.

There is a wealth of potential news stories available via the States Assembly, this guide and the press notices we send out highlight where you can find those easily. If you have any specific questions, you are welcome to get in touch with us.

Ultimately the elected members of the States Assembly make decisions which impact every Islander and so what happens in the States, what's said and debated, is critical for every one of your readers, listeners and viewers.

The States Assembly website is: www.statesassembly.je

You can contact the Digital and Public Engagement team on: 01534 441017

Or email: statesgreffe@gov.je

You can also follow us for news updates on our social media channels:

[X](#) formerly Twitter: @StatesAssembly

[Facebook](#): @StatesAssembly

[YouTube](#): @statesassemblyjsy

[Instagram](#): @StatesAssembly

[LinkedIn](#): @StatesAssembly

WHAT IS THE STATES ASSEMBLY?

The States Assembly is Jersey's legislature - equivalent to parliament in other countries like the UK. It is **NOT** the Government of Jersey. The Government is made up politically from some elected members of the States Assembly, supported by officer employees of the civil service. This is similar to the UK, except there isn't a party-political system in the same way.

The Government is split into departments and is led by the Council of Ministers, headed by the Chief Minister. All queries about government reports, work and requests for interviews, should be sent to the relevant Government department [communications team](#).

The Government of Jersey has its own website: www.gov.je

All elected Members sit in the States Assembly and are responsible for:

- Debating matters of public importance
- Making new laws and regulations
- Approving the amount of public money to be spent by the Government each year
- Approving the amount of tax to be raised
- Appointing the Government and holding Ministers to account.

You can read more on our website: [States Assembly | About the States Assembly](#)

WHO IS IN THE STATES ASSEMBLY?

The States Assembly is made up of 49 elected members. Unlike many other jurisdictions, Jersey has different types of elected member. 12 of them are Constables or *Connétables* and at present the other 37 are Deputies. The last election was in 2022 and the next one is 7 June 2026.

In March 2025, the States Assembly voted to bring back the role of Senator, which had been abolished for the 2022 election. If the necessary changes to the law are agreed, we expect this to be in place for June 7, 2026 when Jersey next goes to the polls.

Constables are not police officers, they are heads of their Parish (although they do oversee the Honorary police in their area). There are twelve Constables, one for each parish, and they are voted in only by the people in their parish. They manage the parish affairs with their staff, including roads, refuse collections and rates.

Deputies represent their electoral areas, but don't have any other administrative roles. Electoral reforms came into effect at the 2022 elections. These changed the constituencies for Deputies in order to make it fairer and were aimed at improving representation based on population.

Originally all Deputies were voted in just by their parish, but now some parishes have been amalgamated into a constituency, and St Helier has been split into three. There are nine 'constituencies'. The States has voted to bring back Senators for 2026, and so each constituency will have to lose a deputy so that the number of Members remains the same overall. This will reduce the number of Deputies to 28 from 2026.

Senators are the only form of Member elected on an island-wide vote. From 2026 it is planned that there will be 9 Senators and candidates will appear on every constituency ballot paper.

Party politics

There are currently two political parties in the Island:

- [Reform Jersey](#)
- [Advance Jersey](#)

Jersey doesn't have a party-political system as you will find in many other countries such as the UK and the USA. Individuals can stand as a party candidate or as an independent candidate on their own manifesto, and they are free to vote as they and their constituents would want them to. This means there is no 'official' opposition.

Government and the non-executive

Government, led by the **Council of Ministers**, can be made up of any of the 49 elected members. That means you could get members from any political party, as well as

independents, Deputies and Connétables (and Senators from 2026), all sitting at the [Council of Ministers](#) table together. There are 12 Ministers and the Chief Minister.

The [Chief Minister](#) (Jersey's equivalent to the Prime Minister in the UK) is appointed by all elected Members following a general election. They then choose their preferred Ministers, and these choices could be supported or opposed (other candidates might stand) by the States Assembly.

Scrutiny and other non-executive committees

The politicians who are not in the Government as Ministers or Assistant Ministers, are eligible to join [Scrutiny](#). This is the system that keeps a check on Ministers and their decision-making, on behalf of the public. Scrutiny's work is important as they review decisions and policies, often making recommendations and amendments to proposed Government laws.

Scrutiny members will question Ministers in public hearings, and they use expert advisors as well as call for stakeholder and public input. Scrutiny's role is similar to that of Select Committees in the UK Parliament.

There are [five scrutiny panels](#) and the [Public Accounts Committee](#). For certain major reviews, such as Assisted Dying, which are cross-departmental, an individual review panel might be set up.

You can attend a Scrutiny public hearing in person, although you can only watch and not take part unless you have been called to give evidence. On the day go to the Royal Court entrance and ask for an Usher to bring you through to the room. The times and room location will be on the [Scrutiny website](#). You can also [watch the hearing live online or watch a recording](#).

Scrutiny panels want public engagement with their work, often calling for question suggestions for quarterly Ministerial hearings, along with submissions. They are also usually open to talking to the media about their review reports – we'll provide information on which Panel members are available for interviews in press notices.

[The Public Accounts Committee](#) determines whether public funds have been used efficiently, effectively, and economically to deliver value for money for Islanders. It consists of elected Members and lay members.

The five Scrutiny panels are:

[Corporate Services Panel](#) (covers the work of the Chief Minister – excluding Financial Services, and the Minister for Treasury and Resources.)

[Children, Education and Home Affairs](#) (covers the work of the Minister for Children and Families, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, and the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs).

[Health and Social Security Panel](#) (covers the work of the Ministers for Health and Social Services and Social Security).

[Economic and International Affairs](#) (covers the work of the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, the Minister for External Relations (including Financial Services) and the Minister for International Development).

[Environment, Housing and Infrastructure](#) (covers the work of the Minister for Housing and Communities, and the Minister for Environment and Minister for Infrastructure)

The [Scrutiny Liaison Committee](#) is made up of the Chairs of the five Scrutiny Panels and the Chair of the PAC. It is responsible for keeping the operation of the scrutiny function under review and maintaining oversight of related expenditure.

The [Privileges and Procedures Committee](#) is **NOT** part of Scrutiny. It is responsible for the procedures of the States Assembly, for Members' facilities, and the Code of Conduct for Members. It is made up of elected Members and led by the Greffier of the States.

HOW DOES THE STATES ASSEMBLY WORK?

The Government of Jersey will bring forward new laws and changes to laws as part of their work, but ANY elected member of the States Assembly can put forward a [proposition](#), or topic for debate, to change a law or create a new one. This is similar to a private members' bill in the UK, although in Jersey these will all be timetabled for debate by the States Assembly. All Members can also propose Amendments to tabled propositions.

Following a debate, members can vote to approve (*Pour*), reject (*Contre*), or Abstain. You will find a [record of votes](#) on the States Assembly website, if you miss it in the Chamber.

NB: States Members may speak English, French or Jerriais in States Meetings. Originally States business was conducted in French and the use of English was only adopted in 1900. Some elements of the States meeting, including the voting, roll call, and prayers, are still carried out in French. Where States Members use languages other than English the States Greffe will provide a translation as soon as possible.

You can attend a States meeting in person and sit in the public gallery. Or you can [watch the meeting live online or watch a recording](#). You can also watch it on [YouTube](#) and live on [X](#).

No photography or filming is allowed in the States Chamber without permission.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INFORMATION ABOUT THE STATES MEETINGS?

The [States Assembly Calendar](#) lists the upcoming States meetings and if you click on that meeting entry, you will see all the scheduled debates for that sitting. Meetings usually start on a Tuesday and will continue into the following days until the scheduled business is finished.

A couple of days prior to a States meeting, the [Order paper](#) will go up. This contains, not only the list of what business is going to happen in the meeting, but also the [written](#)

[questions](#) which were lodged before the meeting and the oral questions with notice that will be asked live in the States meeting, but were notified prior to that day.

There are also questions without notice that are put to the Chief Minister and two of their ministers, at each sitting. These can often be about very topical issues as no notice period is required. These are live.

[Minutes](#) are taken of all States sittings, which are a formal record of attendance, the questions asked and statements made, as well as decisions taken. These are not available immediately following a States sitting, but you can always check back on the [recording of the session](#) if you missed something and need information urgently.

The States Assembly comms team will issue a press release immediately following each day of the States meeting, which gives time stamps for each element of the States sitting in order to make it easier for you to find what you want quickly. This is also available in the [news section](#) of our website.

There will also be a transcript of the entire meeting available as a [Hansard record](#), which is available online.

Public Petitions to bring about change

Members of the public can [start a petition](#) and if they receive 1,000 signatures, they will receive a written response from a Government Minister. At 5,000 signatures, it will be considered for debate in the States Assembly. New petitions are shared via the States Assembly social media channels, and you can see what petitions are live on the [website](#).

NON-ELECTED OFFICERS IN THE STATES ASSEMBLY

The Bailiff: The Bailiff is President of the States and acts as the Speaker of the Assembly during meetings, ensuring business is conducted in an orderly manner. Outside of the States Assembly, they are also head of the judiciary as President of the Royal Court and the Court of Appeal in Jersey. The role is appointed by the King.

The Lieutenant-Governor is the King's personal representative in the Island and traditionally only speaks twice in the Assembly—on arrival and at the end of their five-year term. The LG will however, occasionally sit next to the Bailiff and observe debates.

The Greffier of the States. The Greffier supports the work of the States Assembly, working on behalf of all members and advising on the rules of the Assembly (Standing Orders) as well as keeping records of debates and voting. The Greffier and Deputy Greffier sit in the States during meetings (in front of the Bailiff).

The Attorney General or Solicitor General. H.M. Attorney General and H.M Solicitor General, are the legal advisor to the Government and States Assembly. They are often sitting in during Meetings, or are available, to explain and advise on the laws of Jersey in order for the elected Members to have an informed debate.

The Dean. The Dean of Jersey is the leader of the Church of England in the Island and leads the Assembly in prayer at the start of each session. The Dean can make speeches but as a non-elected Member, is not able to vote.

WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT THE STATES ASSEMBLY?

If you have any questions about States Assembly business in terms rules and procedures, Scrutiny or meetings, then contact our team as we work in the States Greffe. You can contact us on: 01534 441020 Or email: statesgreffe@gov.je

Do **not** confuse us with the **Judicial Greffe** who administer the courts system.

Do **NOT** contact the Bailiff about States Assembly or Government queries, these should go to the [States Greffe](#) or [Government](#).

THE UPCOMING ELECTION IN 2026

With the **next election** due on 7 June, 2026, the sister site to the States Assembly, is [vote.je](#) which is the focal point for campaigns to encourage people to stand for election, and then vote in the election.

FAQs

How do I get in touch with a States Member for an interview? You can go [direct to them](#), although Government Ministers might ask you to go via their [departmental Comms team](#).

Where do I find propositions that have been lodged but not yet debated?

You can search for [Propositions and Amendments](#), and you can also see what is due to be debated in each sitting, prior to the Order Paper being released, by looking at the date of the next States Meeting in [the calendar](#) and the Propositions will be listed.

Where do I find information about matters that have been agreed by the States Assembly, but not yet completed?

The States decided to launch a [Decision Tracker](#) to improve transparency around outstanding matters that have been approved. This is available on our website and is updated every quarter.

Where do I see what is currently being reviewed by Scrutiny?

You can look at individual Panel pages where work will be listed, including letters and other correspondence, Hearing Minutes and submissions; or go to the [Reviews page](#).

What if we want to take a photograph or film in the States Assembly? Filming and photography is not allowed during States Assembly sittings, apart from during the roll call and requires permission. If you would like to arrange this, contact the [Digital and Public Engagement team](#). Interviews with members can be conducted outside the building in the Royal Square.

Do you have photographs of States Members that we can use? Yes. They will be available on our website shortly, but in the meantime, you can [email the Digital and Public Engagement team](#) who can supply one for you. We also have some images of the States Assembly building if these are needed.

Do States Members meet up with the public regularly outside of election time? Yes, most of the elected Members hold constituency drop-in surgeries in order to listen to what issues their constituents are having. You can find the times and locations [here](#).

There is some terminology I don't understand. You can review a glossary of terms in our [Guide to the States Assembly](#).

How old is the States Assembly? You can read about the history of the States Assembly [here](#).

What is the gold mace that is brought into the start of each meeting for? You can read about the historic Royal Mace and its importance to Jersey [here](#).

Why is the States debate not being filmed for a certain discussion? What is an in-camera debate? You will find an explanation of this and other [procedural processes](#) on our website.

What is the complaints procedure against States Members and Ministers and where do I see the outcomes? [The Commissioner for Standards](#) is responsible for considering complaints about the conduct of States Members. [The Jersey Complaints Panel](#) investigates complaints by members of the public against Ministerial decisions or maladministration by Government departments.

Where/which is the States Assembly building?

In Royal Square, you will find the States Assembly building, which forms the corner of Halkett Place and the Square. The Assembly building is pink and is the left half of the section running along Hill Street. The right-hand side is the Royal Court and Bailiff's Chambers. You can access the public gallery off Halkett Place.